Illinois Department of Transportation

THE SPRING 2006 ILLINOIS MOTORIST OPINION SURVEY

Conducted for

Illinois Department of Transportation

Conducted by

Survey Research Office
Center for State Policy and Leadership
University *of* Illinois *at* Springfield (UIS)

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

June 23, 2006

[Results Weighted by Population Distribution of IDOT Districts]

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Introduction

The Illinois Department of Transportation contracted with the Survey Research Office, located within the Center for State Policy and Leadership, of the University of Illinois at Springfield (UIS) to conduct a mail-out Motorist Opinion Survey in the Spring of 2006. Similar surveys had been conducted for the Department in every Spring from 2001 through 2005 and in the Fall of 2001. Staff of the UIS Survey Research Office offered advice concerning final question wording, assisted in developing the specific methodology (see below), implemented the data collection procedures (see below) and data input, and analyzed the results. A summary of the results are presented in this report.[1]

Methodology

The sample. For the Spring 2006 survey, a stratified sample of "listed" Illinois households was purchased from Survey Sampling, Inc., one of the leading vendors of samples in the country.[2] The sample was stratified by IDOT region, with 2000 households randomly selected from District 1, and 190 from each of the other eight IDOT Districts (for a total of 1,520 outside of District 1). Thus, a grand total of 3,520 randomly-selected households were in the original sample.

It should be noted that this is the same methodology that has been used in all previous surveys except Spring 2002. In that survey, both a cross-sectional sample (such as this) and a panel design (following up on those who responded in the Fall 2001 survey) were used. Because the cross-sectional portion of this design was thought to better represent licensed drivers, the original cross-sectional sampling design was selected for subsequent surveys.

Data collection procedures. Each original sample member was sent an initial survey package at the end of March, 2006.[3] These initial packages consisted of a personalized letter from the Secretary of IDOT, a four-page questionnaire in booklet form, and a postage-paid return envelope addressed to the UIS-SRO in an outside envelope with the IDOT logo.[4] About one week after this initial mailing, a postcard thank-you / reminder was sent to all sample members. And, about a two weeks after the postcard,

[1] After receiving feedback from relevant IDOT personnel, we will be submitting a final version of this draft summary. Because of timing differences from past years, the results in this final draft are the same as those in the preliminary report except for some corrections under "Tier Four" on page 11. The number of completions this year is very similar to the number on which last year's report was based.

[2] In the initial Spring 2001 survey, the sample was purchased from Survey Sampling, Inc. rather than selected from the Secretary of State's list of licensed drivers because of time considerations. Since then, this decision has been driven by the desire to maintain consistency in this aspect of the methodology, particularly since a purpose of these surveys is to assess changes over time.

[3] The initial survey packages were mailed March 31, 2006; postcard reminders were mailed April 7; and follow-up survey packages to non-respondents were mailed April 24 and 26.

[4] The survey packages were the same as those for all the earlier surveys, with the exception of the inclusion of focus group participation forms in the Fall 2001 survey packages.

a follow-up survey package was sent to non-respondents. This follow-up survey package was similar in composition to the first survey package.

One variation used in the latest Spring 2003 through 2006 surveys is *worthy of note*. In previous cross-sectional surveys, we asked the licensed driver with the next birthday to complete the questionnaire in order to "randomly" vary the characteristics of the respondent. However, because we have difficulty in soliciting responses from the youngest licensed drivers, we have *explicitly asked for the youngest licensed driver in the household* to complete the survey in a random half of the sample in these most recent surveys. In all cases, we did ask that another licensed driver in the household complete the survey if the requested driver was not available.

Returns and response rate. Through May 24, 2006, over 1,300 (n = 1,319) usable surveys had been returned to the Survey Research Office and input for analysis. This represents almost 38 percent (37.5%) of the sample, and is *an "initial" response rate that underestimates the actual response rate*. This *initial* response rate from the random "next birthday" half is 38 percent (38.4%), just slightly higher than the 37 percent (36.6%) response rate for the "youngest driver" half.

We describe this as an "initial response rate" because the number of mail-out problems and the number who indicated having no licensed driver in the household have not been subtracted from the base. When these are subtracted from the base, the response rate (known as the cooperation rate) for the cross-sectional survey rises to almost 40 percent (39.4%). The cooperation rate is 40 percent (40.4%) for the "next birthday" half and a just slightly lower 39 percent (38.7%) for the "youngest driver" half. Relevant response and cooperation rate numbers for the total sample and by IDOT region are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Cross-Sectional Sample and Response Rates,
Total and by IDOT District*

District	Original number	Mail problems	Not Licensed Driver / Deceased	Remain-ing number	Returns	"Initial" Response Rate (base: all)	Coopera-tion Rate (base: remaining)
1	2,000	50	42	1908	660	33.0%	34.6%
2	190	8	3	179	81	42.6%	45.3%
3	190	4	5	181	86	45.3%	47.5%
4	190	4	6	180	94	49.5%	52.2%
5	190	7	4	179	77	40.5%	43.0%
6	190	3	6	181	77	40.5%	42.5%
7	190	4	12	174	88	46.3%	50.6%
8	190	2	3	185	82	43.2%	44.3%
9	190	5	5	180	74	38.9%	41.1%
TOTAL	**3,520**	**84**	**86**	**3347**	**1,319**	**37.5%**	39.4%
1	*2,000*	*50*	*42*	*1908*	*660*	*33.0%*	*34.6%*
2 - 9	*1,520*	*37*	*44*	*1439*	*659*	*43.4%*	*45.8%*

*The above summary represents returns through May 24, 2006.

For the results reported in the summary below, respondents in the 2006 sample have been weighted to reflect each district's overall estimated proportion of licensed drivers. The estimated proportions for each district used in this weighting, as in the past reports, are: District 1 - Schaumburg (58.6%); District 2 - Dixon (8.8%); District 3 – Ottawa (5.9%); District 4 - Peoria (4.8%); District 5 - Paris (5.7%); District 6 – Springfield (5.3%); District 7 - Effingham (2.7%); District 8 - Collinsville (5.5%); and District 9 - Carbondale (2.8%).[5] Note that in this report, we have sometimes analyzed results by dividing the state into two areas, District 1 (the "Chicago area") and Districts 2 through 9 (the "downstate" area).

The sampling error for this survey is just less than +/- 2.7 percent, at the 95 percent confidence level. That is, the percentage results for the full sample will be within 2.7 percentage points of the actual population characteristics 95 percent of the time.[6]

The questionnaire

The questionnaire was a four-page booklet. It contained questions that have been part of the survey since its inception, and as usual, it contained sections which contained questions addressing topical issues.

Continuing questions are found in the first and last parts of the questionnaire.

In the first part of the questionnaire (pages 1 and 2), respondents were asked to rate various aspects of state highways and bridges under three main headings: maintaining highways and traffic flow; road repair and construction; and traveler services. Respondents were then asked about their awareness and use of the IDOT toll-free telephone number and website. And following this, they were asked to rate IDOT employees on four characteristics and to give a couple overall evaluations of IDOT (overall performance and frequency IDOT can be trusted to do what is right regarding transportation issues).[7]

In the last part of the questionnaire (bottom of page 4), respondents were asked selected "objective background" information. These included questions about the number of miles respondents drive per year and their residential location as well as information regarding the respondents' age, gender, education level and household income.

Questions on several topical issues were placed in this year's questionnaire. Two of these were the topics of commuting and information sources about road and traffic

[5] For the weighting, the 2000 population Census figures for Illinois counties were used. However, the proportion of licensed drivers for the Chicago metro area was decreased somewhat from the population proportion because of two factors: 1) the likelihood that this area contains a higher proportion of households with no licensed driver; and 2) the likelihood that the population in this area contains a higher proportion of household members not old enough to drive. It is acknowledged that estimation is involved here; however, it should be noted that any small changes in this weighting will have no impact on the substantive results.

[6] Note that this assumes a non-biased sampling frame and no bias in those who respond.

[7] The trust question was first asked in the Spring 2005 survey.

conditions (page 3 and top of page 4). The other relates to work zone driving issues (middle of page 4).

The first part of the commuting section asked about the nature of respondents' commuting behavior (mode as well as number of miles and minutes).[8] Those not using public transportation to commute were asked their reasons for not doing so. Those who commute to/from work were asked about their consistency in taking the same route to/from work, and those who use different routes were asked about their sources of information about traffic or road conditions ***before*** driving. All commuters were asked about their sources of information for traffic and road conditions ***while*** driving.

All respondents were asked about the sources of information they generally use to get information about road or traffic conditions or about road construction projects affecting highway routes they are going to take. They were also asked about the likelihood they would use selected "future" information sources if they were available now.

In the work zone section, respondents were whether their awareness of the importance of driving safely in work zones had increased, decreased or stayed about the same over the past 12 months. They were also asked about their awareness of fines for speeding violations in work zones and whether larger fines affect their driving behavior. Respondents were also asked a question about their knowledge of deaths that occur from vehicle accidents in work zones.

Description of the responding sample

The following presents a description of the sample in terms of selected demographics asked about in the questionnaire and offers comparisons between the demographics obtained when asking for "the youngest licensed driver" and when asking for "the driver with the next birthday."

As with the substantive results, this description is based on results weighted by IDOT district. (See Table 2 for a summary.) It should be noted that throughout most of this report, percentages have been rounded to integers.[9] (Rounding may result in percentages not adding exactly to100%.)

Gender. For those responding sample members (98% of the total sample), somewhat more than half (54%) indicated being male while the remaining 46 percent indicated being female. The proportion of males is somewhat greater in the "regular" half (the "next birthday" half) of the sample than for the "youngest driver" half (56% vs. 52%).

Age. The average age of respondents in the total sample is 55 years old (both mean and median = 55.0 years). Nearly 30 percent of the respondents are in the two youngest age groups, split between those 16 to 35 years of age (13%) and those 36 to 45 years of age (16%). Just over one in five are in each of the next two age groups: 46

[8] The questions relating to time and miles of the commute were asked in the objective section in last year's survey.

[9] Numbers with decimals of .5 are rounded to the even integer.

to 55 (22%) and 56 to 65 (22%). Nearly 30 percent are in the two oldest age categories, split between those 66 to 75 (15%) and those over 75 (13%).

Table 2
Selected Demographic Characteristics
of Spring 2006 Sample

Characteristic	Total Sample	Random Half Asked for Youngest Driver	Random Half Asked for Next Birthday
Gender			
Male	54%	52%	56%
Female	46%	48%	44%
(based on 98%)			
Age			
16 to 35	13%	16%	10%
36 to 45	16%	15%	17%
46 to 55	22%	20%	23%
56 to 65	22%	23%	20%
66 to 75	15%	14%	16%
Over 75	13%	12%	13%
Mean	55.0 yrs	54.2 yrs	55.9 yrs
Median	55.0 yrs	55.0 yrs	55.0 yrs
(based on 96%)			
Education			
Up to HS	28%	29%	28%
Post HS	32%	33%	32%
4-yr college	39%	39%	40%
(based on 97%)			
Income			
< $25,000	13%	14%	12%
$25-49,000	27%	25%	29%
$50-74,000	26%	27%	26%
$75-100,000	16%	17%	16%
> $100,000	17%	17%	18%
(based on 85%)			
Miles drive /yr			
Up to 6,000*	23%	23%	23%
6,000-12,000	36%	36%	37%
12-20,000	28%	29%	27%
Over 20,000	13%	12%	13%
Mean	14,045 miles	14,708 miles	13,417 miles
Median	12,000 miles	12,000 miles	12,000 miles
(based on 90%)			

*Among those who indicated any driving miles. About one-tenth either did not answer the question or gave “0” miles.

Table 2 (continued)

Characteristic	Total Sample	Random Half Asked for Youngest Driver	Random Half Asked for Next Birthday
Residential location			
City of Chicago	10%	11%	10%
Chicago suburbs	38%	38%	38%
Metro East	3%	4%	3%
City > 75,000	8%	8%	9%
City 20-75,000	10%	9%	12%
City/town 10-20,000	8%	8%	8%
Town < 10,000	13%	14%	12%
Rural	9%	9%	9%
(based on 96%)			
Miles drive on job / year			
% giving number	42%	41%	43%
Of these:			
1 to 100	*9%*	*11%*	*7%*
101 to 1000	*20%*	*18%*	*22%*
1001 to 5000	*23%*	*21%*	*25%*
5001 to 12,000	*26%*	*27%*	*25%*
Over 12,000	*22%*	*23%*	*21%*
Median	*5,000*	*5,000*	*5,000*
Commuting*			
% giving answer	53-54%	53-55%	53-54%
Of these:			
avg miles one way to work	*Mean = 18.4 Median = 14.2*	*Mean = 18.1 Median = 15.0*	*Mean = 18.7 Median = 12.0*
avg minutes to work	*Mean = 30.2 Median = 25.0*	*Mean = 29.9 Median = 25.0*	*Mean = 30.6 Median = 25.0*
avg minutes home from work	*Mean = 31.1 Median = 30.0*	*Mean = 32.8 Median = 30.0*	*Mean = 33.0 Median = 30.0*

*In the Spring 2006 questionnaire, these commuting questions were placed in the topical commuting section. In the Spring 2005 questionnaire, these questions were in the final background section. The 2005 placement resulted in more respondents providing this information. The 2006 respondents generally report slightly greater average lengths of commuting distance/time than did the 2005 respondents. This is primarily because of this tendency among the "youngest" half of the sample.

Asking for the "youngest licensed driver" apparently increased the number of those in the youngest age category, with 16 percent in the random "youngest driver" half being 16 to 35 years old compared to 10 percent for the "regular" ("next birthday") half. And, this is the only demographic and driving-related characteristic for which the overall differences between the two sample groups are statistically-significant.

Driving-related descriptions. *Miles drive per year.* The median number of miles respondents drive per year is 12,000 miles while the mean number is somewhat higher, just over 14,000.[10] The median number of miles driven per year does not differ between the two sample halves, but the mean number of miles driven per year for the "youngest" half over 1,000 miles per year greater than the mean for the "regular" half. The percentage results for the four categories of miles drive per year is very similar for both halves: up to 6,000 miles per year (23% for each); 6,001 to 12,000 miles per year (36%-37%); 12,001 to 20,000 miles per year (27%-29%); and over 20,000 miles per year (12%-13%).

Miles drive on job per year. Just over four in ten (42%) reported mileage for miles they drive on their job per year (not including commuting). *For these respondents*, the median number of miles they reported driving per year on their job is 5,000. Nearly three in ten (29%) of these respondents reported driving 1,000 miles or less per year; and fairly similar percentages reported driving each of the next three mileage categories: 1,001 to 5,000 miles (23%); 5,001 to 12,001 miles (26%); and more than 12,000 miles (22%). The median number of miles driven per year for their job is the same for the two sample groups, and the overall differences in mileage categories are not statistically-significant.

Commuting. When asked about the miles and minutes of commuting, somewhat more than half (53%-54%, depending on the question) of the respondents reported information. The median number of miles these respondents reported being from work is 14 miles. The median number of minutes it takes to get to work is 25 minutes while the median number of minutes it takes to get home is 30 minutes – for a total median commute time of nearly one hour (55 minutes). The associated mean numbers are somewhat greater, reflecting the fact that there are some respondents at the higher ends of each distance/time period that "pull" the average numbers up from the median.

About the same number of respondents in both halves of the sample reported commuting information. For those who did, the largest difference between the two halves is found for median distance from work (15 miles for the "youngest" half and 12 miles for the "regular" half). The remaining means and medians are either very close or equivalent.

Residential location. Almost half (48%) of the "weighted" respondents reported living in the two listed metro Chicago areas, with one in ten indicating they live in the City of Chicago (10%) and nearly four in ten (38%) indicating they live in the Chicago

[10] These results are based on the 90 percent of respondents who gave any miles per year.

suburbs.[11] Proportions around one in ten reported living in five other listed areas: a city of more than 75,000 (8%); a city of 20,000 to 75,000 (10%); a city/town of 10,000 to 19,999 (8%); a city/town/village less than 10,000 (13%); and a rural area (9%). Less then one in twenty (3%) reported living in the Metro East area. Overall, residential location is similar for both the "youngest" and "regular" samples.

Education. Almost three in ten (28%) of the respondents have up to a high school diploma or GED as their highest level of education while nearly one-third (32%) have some post high school education and nearly four in ten (39%) have a four-year college degree. These results are very similar for both sample halves of the respondents.

Income. The median household income of respondents is in the $50,000 to $74,999 range, with the best estimate being just under $60,000 (about $59,600). About 13 percent of all responding households have incomes less than $25,000 a year, and 27 percent are in households with incomes between $25,000 and $50,000 a year. About one-quarter (26%) of the respondents are in households with incomes between $50,000 and $75,000 a year, and the remaining respondents are split between those in households with incomes between $75,000 and $100,000 a year (16%) and those in households with incomes of more than $100,000 a year (17%). Overall, the difference in the income level distributions between the two sample groups is very small and not statistically-significant.

Summary of differences between the "youngest driver" and "next birthday" sample groups, and differences with past surveys. The only differences between the two sample groups in the current survey found to be statistically significant are those having to do with age. But even here, the differences between the two groups are not major. Rather, we find the "youngest" sample to have somewhat (and significantly) more in the 16 to 35 age group (16% vs. 10%) and somewhat more in the 56 to 65 age group (23% vs. 20%) while the "next birthday" group has somewhat more in the 36 to 55 age groups (40% vs. 35%). Further, while the mean age is somewhat greater in the "next birthday" half than in the "youngest" half (almost 56 years vs. just over 54 years), the median age is found to be the same in the two sample groups. Differences on all other characteristics are smaller and are not statistically-signifcant.

Comparisons of the 2006 respondent portrait with past years

Comparing the 2006 and 2005 portraits. A comparison of the demographic portraits of the Spring 2006 and Spring 2005 survey respondents finds a few relatively small differences. Compared to last year, the Spring 2006 sample: contains slightly more females (46% vs. 44% last year); is just slightly older (median age of 55 vs. 54 last year); drives somewhat fewer miles per year (59% drive up to 12,000 miles vs. 52% last year); and is drawn slightly less from the City of Chicago (10% vs. 13% last year) and slightly more from the Chicago suburbs (38% vs. 35% last year). Fewer 2006 respondents also gave information regarding commuting distance (54% vs. 62% last

[11] See the description of weighting in the Methodology section. Note that 17 percent of those in District One reported living in the City of Chicago, over 60 percent (64%) reported living in the Chicago suburbs, and 19 percent reported another type of area.

year), and this could have been a function of where the commuting distance questions were placed.[12] For those who did give this information, the commuting distance and time are slightly greater than that reported last year. For the median results, this latter result is found to be largely a function of the "youngest half" of the sample.

Comparing with previous years. To put the demographic portrait of the 2006 respondents into broader perspective, we should first emphasize that there are not great differences in the demographics across the span of these surveys. Yet, there are some differences.

First, we can note that the 2006 respondents contain the greatest proportion of females (46%) -- and likewise the lowest proportion of males (54%) -- across the span of the surveys. Further analysis shows that it was the Spring 2002 survey that is most different in this respect, having 60 percent males. Since then, the proportion of males dropped to 55 percent in 2003, increased to 57 and 56 percent in 2004 and 2005, and then dropped again to 54 percent this year. Some years (such as in 2004 and this year), the "youngest driver" half has seemed to account for increasing the proportion of females; in other years (such as 2005), there has been little to no difference between the two sample groups in this regard.

In addition, the following commentary, part of which is taken from earlier reports, is useful in terms of describing differences across the surveys.

> In 2005 we wrote: "A comparison of the demographic portraits of the Spring 2005 and Spring 2004 surveys finds only small differences. The Spring 2005 sample is just slightly older, has slightly fewer with high school (or less) as their highest level of education, and has somewhat fewer in the lowest two income categories. However, these differences are minor." As we have seen, the Spring 2006 sample is slightly older yet. Differences in education and income level between 2005 and 2006 are insignificant.
>
> In still earlier reports, we commented on the similarity of the 2004 demographic and 2003 demographic portraits. And a comparison of the demographics of these two surveys with the Spring 2002 cross-sectional portion shows that the 2004 and 2003 surveys contain respondents who are generally somewhat younger. This, of course, was consistent with the introduction of the "youngest" driver sample in the 2004 and 2003 surveys. This trend generally continues in 2005 (and now 2006) even though the overall 2005 sample (and now 2006 sample) are slightly older than the 2004 sample.[13]

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[12] In 2005, these questions were placed in the final objective information section. In 2006, these questions were placed in the topical section on commuting.

[13] In 2005 we also wrote: "The 2005 respondents overall appear to have driven somewhat more miles per year than the 2004 respondents when we examine the mean miles driven ... But the median miles driven per year is the same (at 12,000 miles/year). In 2004, we had commented that respondents in the 2004 and 2003 surveys appeared to have driven somewhat fewer miles per year than the 2002 cross-sectional sample. At the time and from the 2004 results, this appeared to be a reflection of the somewhat younger sample. The fact that the 2005 sample is slightly older than the 2004 sample and is found to have driven somewhat more miles per year is consistent with this observation." However, the most recent 2006 respondents are both slightly older and overall drove somewhat fewer miles per year than was the case in

A SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The following pages summarize the final results. For the Spring 2006 survey, we present the results for the total sample, as we did for the Spring 2003 through Spring 2005 surveys and both surveys in 2001. For summary results reporting trends, we have included three averages for the Spring 2002 survey: that for all respondents; that for cross-sectional sample; and that for the panel sample. However, it is our opinion that the best comparison here is the with the 2002 "cross-sectional" sample (the middle result reported), and it is this figure we use in commenting upon trends below.

Ratings of specific aspects of highways and bridges

We asked respondents to rate nine aspects under the category of Maintaining Highways and Traffic Flow, another nine aspects under the category of Road Repair and Construction, and five aspects under the category of Traveler Services.

Generally speaking, we find a great deal of consistency between the most recent Spring 2006 findings and results in the past three years (back to the Spring 2003 survey) with regard to the order of aspects within each major category. Differences in rank order generally occur only for those aspects rated very similar to each other.

The Spring 2006 mean ratings also generally do not differ a great deal from the Spring 2005 mean ratings for most items. The big exception here is found for the aspect of "advance information about construction projects" under the major topic of Road Repair and Construction. This aspect showed a significant positive increase in the mean rating and in the percent giving excellent or good ratings.

Aside from this one aspect, most other ratings under the general area of Road Repair and Construction showed small increases in the mean ratings from 2005 to 2006 while the ratings under the general area of Traveler Services showed small decreases. Ratings under the general area of Maintaining Highways and Traffic Flow had a mixture of relatively small or minimal increases, decreases and no change.

The following summarizes these results in more detail. Summary highlights of the results for the 2006 respondents are found within the text. Tables having more detail for the 2006 results and trends for all rating aspects follow after the summary text.

2005. Further, there is little difference in the 2006 results for miles driven per year between the "youngest driver" half and the "next birthday" half.

Maintaining highways and traffic flow

Using the 2006 findings, the nine aspects can be ordered into the following general four tiers. Presented below are: the aspect; the percent giving an "excellent" rating; the percent giving an "excellent" *or* "good" rating; and the mean rating. (Also see Table 3A.)

	Excel-lent	Excellent or Good	Mean
Tier One			
Traffic signs …….	19%	78%	3.91
Electronic message boards to advice of delays or construction areas ……	19%	73%	3.87
Snow and ice removal ……	17%	74%	3.86
Tier Two			
Visibility of lane / shoulder markings ……..	11%	61%	3.61
Tier Three			
Cleanliness of roadsides ……..	6%	57%	3.52
Timely removal of debris and dead animals ……..	8%	56%	3.50
Landscaping and overall appearance …….	7%	54%	3.49
Tier Four			
Roadside lighting and reflectors ……..	7%	49%	3.41
Timing of traffic signals …….	6%	51%	3.40

The order of the aspects in 2006 is quite similar to that in 2005, with none of the differences being dramatic. The aspect "snow and ice removal" declined from a tie for first into third place, just behind both "traffic signs," which remained in first place, and "electronic message boards," which showed an increase in its mean score and a jump from Tier Two into Tier One. The aspect of "visibility of lane/shoulder markings" remained in fourth place, but it warranted a Tier Two status since there was more distance between it and the next three ratings than was the case last year. The aspects in Tier Three each changed their relative positions within this Tier, but the overall point here is the closeness of the results, as it was last year.[14] The Tier Four aspects were the same as last year.

When comparing 2006 mean ratings to those in 2005, we find: four aspects where we see an increase in the mean ratings (with two of the four being very small increases of only +.02); two aspects with no change; and three aspects where we see a decline in mean ratings (with one being only -.01). (See Table 3B.)

The largest increases occurred for two aspects. One is the aspect of "electronic message boards to advise drivers of delays or construction areas," which experienced an increase of +.07, up to 3.87, the most positive mean score for this aspect in the

[14] "Cleanliness of roadsides" jumped from sixth to fifth position; "timely removal of debris and dead animals" jumped from seventh to sixth position; and "landscaping and overall appearance" dropped from fifth to seventh position.

survey series. The other is the aspect of "timing of traffic signals to maintain flow of traffic," which experienced an increase of +.05, up to 3.40, a score slightly lower than it obtained in the 2003 through 2004 survey years.

The largest decreases occurred for two aspects, both of which experienced declines of .05. "Snow and ice removal" dropped to 3.86 from the 2005 mean, which in turn was .05 lower than the 2004 survey mean. Means for this aspect show a declining trend from the 2003 and 2004 surveys through the most recent 2006 survey, and the 2006 mean is the lowest since the Spring 2001 survey.[15] The other aspect where we see this decline is that of "landscaping and overall appearance of roadsides and medians" where the 2006 mean rating is somewhat lower than any of the mean scores going back to the Spring of 2003.

Road repair and construction

Using the 2006 findings, the nine aspects can be ordered into the following general four tiers. Presented below are: the aspect; the percent giving an "excellent" rating; the percent giving an "excellent" *or* "good" rating; and the mean rating. (Also see Table 4A.)

	Excel-lent	Excellent or Good	Mean
Tier One			
Warning signs when workers present ……..	20%	76%	3.92
Tier Two			
Workzone signs to direct merging traffic and alert motorists to reduce speed ……	12%	63%	3.65
Advance information about construction projects ……..	14%	58%	3.57
Tier Three			
Signs about alternative routes when construction …….	8%	47%	3.35
Ride quality / smoothness on interstates ……	4%	45%	3.28
Tier Four			
The flow of traffic through workzones …….	3%	34%	3.11
Timeliness of repairs on interstates ……	3%	35%	3.10
Ride quality / smoothness on non-interstates ……	2%	32%	3.08
Timeliness of repairs on non-interstates ……	2%	28%	3.00

The order of these aspects in 2006 is very similar to that found in 2005, with several small exceptions, all found within Tier Four: "the flow of traffic through workzones" (up to 6th from 8th); "timeliness of repairs on interstates" (down to 7th from 6th); and "ride quality / smoothness on non-interstates" (down to 8th from 7th).

[15] The exception to this is the Fall 2001 survey where the mean was 2.71, but the timing of this mean likely affected the responses to this particular aspect (i.e., rating "snow and ice removal" in the Fall).

It is when comparing 2006 rating percentages and means to those in 2005 where we find ***the largest 2005-to-2006 rating change*** in this group – and for that matter, for any of the continuing rating questions. ***This occurs for the aspect of "advance information about construction projects."*** The mean score for this aspect increased from 3.36 in 2005 to 3.57 in 2006, thus warranting a jump from Tier Three into Tier Two. Of note is that the percent who rated this aspect "excellent" increased from 9 percent in 2005 to 14 percent in 2006 – and the percent rating it either "excellent" or "good" increased a full 10 percent points (48% in 2005 to 58% in 2006). ***It is worth repeating that this increase in positive ratings is the largest change from 2005 to 2006 for any of the rating questions.***

With only one exception, the mean ratings for all other aspects in this group show increases from 2005 to 2006, ranging from +.02 to +.06. In addition to the above aspect regarding "advance information about construction projects," the following aspects also show their most positive mean rating in 2006:

- warning signs when workers are present (3.92);
- signs about alternative routes when there is construction (3.35, just higher than the 2004 mean);
- and the flow of traffic through work zones (3.11, slightly higher than the 2003 and 2004 means).

In addition, the 2006 mean for the aspect of "ride quality and smoothness of pavement on interstates" is basically tied for its most positive mean (3.28, about the same as the means from Fall 2001 through Spring 2004). And, the 2006 mean for the aspect of "work zone signs to direct merging traffic and alert motorists to reduce speed" is the highest since the first survey conducted in the Spring of 2001 (3.65 vs. 3.71 in the Spring of 2001).

The exception to this generalization about positive increases from 2005 to 2006 is "timeliness of repairs on non-interstate highways," which shows a decrease of .06. The most recent 3.00 mean rating for this aspect is the lowest since the Fall of 2001 and surpasses only the Spring 2001 mean rating.

Traveler services

Using the 2006 findings, the five aspects can be ordered into the following general three tiers. Presented below are: the aspect; the percent giving an "excellent" rating; the percent giving an "excellent" *or* "good" rating; and the mean rating. (Also see Table 5A.)

	Excel-lent	Excellent or Good	Mean
Tier One			
Informational signs at highway exits for food, gas, and lodging …….……..	21%	83%	4.02
Tier Two			
Informational signs about tourist attractions and state parks ……..	15%	73%	3.84
Cleanliness of rest areas …….	14%	68%	3.74
Safety of rest areas ……..	10%	64%	3.68
Tier Three			
Availability of free IDOT maps …….	14%	51%	3.39

The order of these aspects is the same as that found in the last three years.

An examination of the 2005 to 2006 changes shows that each of these aspects shows a decline, ranging from -.03 to -.06. (See Table 5B.) The largest declines of -.06 apply to two aspects: cleanliness of rest areas (3.74); and safety of rest areas (3.68).

Actually, a great deal of stability is present for all of these aspects across the span of the surveys, particularly if the result of the first Spring 2001 survey is discounted for two of the aspects.[16] Within this context of stability, however, it is also the case that the recent 2006 mean ratings are either the lowest or among the lowest for all but the aspect regarding the availability of free maps. In fact, for all but the last item, we generally find a muted, but nonetheless present, curvilinear trend pattern (i.e., lower to higher and back to lower mean scores).

[16] For two aspects – the safety of rest areas for motorists and the availability of free IDOT maps -- the stability is more in evidence if the result for the first survey in Spring 2001 is discounted. For each of these aspects, the Spring 2001 survey mean is the "low outlier."

Average composite ratings for each general area

For each of the three general areas, we calculated an average composite rating.

In 2006, the composite average ratings for all three general areas fall between the alternatives of “fair” (when coded as 3) and “good” (when coded as 4). The most positive average scores are found for Traveler Services (mean = 3.75; median = 3.80) followed by the averages for Maintaining Highways and Traffic Flow (mean = 3.62; median = 3.67) and then Road Repair and Construction (mean = 3.36; median = 3.42). (See Table 6A.)

Given the above findings regarding trends within each general area, it is not surprising to find that increases occurred in the average scores from 2005 to 2006 for Road Repair and Construction (+.06 for the mean score; +.09 for the median score). It is also not surprising to find that a small decline occurred in one of the average scores for Traveler Services (-.04 for mean score; no change in the median). Virtually no change occurred in the average scores for Maintaining Highways and Traffic Flow (+.01 for mean score; no change for the median score). (See Table 6B.)

The mean and median ratings for each of the three general areas were virtually the same in 2005, 2004 and 2003. Further, for all three areas, we find increases in the composite mean ratings from Spring to Fall of 2001 and then basic stability through 2005. For two of the three areas, this is also the case for the median composite ratings. For Travelers Services, the composite median results are stable across all surveys. (See Tables 6A and 6B.)

Table 3A
Ratings on Aspects relating to
Maintaining Highways and Traffic Flow

Aspect rated[a]	**Excellent (5)**[b]	**Good (4)**	**Fair (3)**	**Poor (2)**	**Very Poor (1)**	***n (% of sample)***	***mean***
5. Traffic signs (for example, directional signs, warning signs, miles to destination signs)	19%	59%	18%	4%	1%	*1304 (99%)*	*3.91*
6. Electronic message boards to advise drivers of delays or construction areas	19%	55%	22%	4%	1%	*1241 (94%)*	*3.87*
4. Snow and ice removal	17%	57%	22%	3%	2%	*1300 (98%)*	*3.86*
7. Visibility of lane and shoulder markings on highways	11%	50%	29%	8%	2%	*1303 (98%)*	*3.61*
1. Cleanliness of roadsides, absence of litter	6%	51%	33%	7%	2%	*1308 (99%)*	*3.52*
2. Timely removal of debris and dead animals from pavement	8%	48%	33%	8%	3%	*1252 (95%)*	*3.50*
3. Landscaping and overall appearance of roadsides and medians	7%	47%	36%	8%	2%	*1303 (98%)*	*3.49*
9. Roadside lighting and reflectors for visibility after dark and in bad weather	7%	42%	38%	11%	2%	*1277 (96%)*	*3.41*
8. Timing of traffic signals to maintain flow of traffic	6%	44%	36%	10%	4%	*1273 (96%)*	*3.40*

[a]The items are ordered by mean rating, from most positive to least positive. The numbers next to the items indicate the order that they appeared in the questionnaire.
[b]The actual scale in the questionnaire is reversed. However, we have recoded the scale so that the higher score represents a more positive rating.

Table 3B
Mean Ratings on Aspects relating to Maintaining Highways and Traffic Flow:
Trends Across Surveys

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 Means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)	Spring 2006 means (n)
5. Traffic signs (for example, directional signs, warning signs, miles to destination signs)	3.86 (1379)	3.89 (1236)	3.92 3.93 3.90	3.90 (1399)	3.94 (1307)	3.91 (1310)	3.91 (1304)
6. Electronic message boards to advise drivers of delays or construction areas	3.70 (1323)	3.81 (1199)	3.79 3.75 3.82	3.70 (1322)	3.79 (1234)	3.80 (1244)	3.87 (1241)
4. Snow and ice removal	3.82 (1363)	3.72 (1222)	3.93 3.89 3.99	3.95 (1400)	3.96 (1302)	3.91 (1326)	3.86 (1300)
7. Visibility of lane and shoulder markings on highways	3.57 (1372)	3.69 (1229)	3.67 3.67 3.67	3.61 (1399)	3.68 (1308)	3.59 (1305)	3.61 (1303)
1. Cleanliness of roadsides, absence of litter	3.36 (1384)	3.56 (1242)	3.50 3.45 3.55	3.52 (1407)	3.47 (1314)	3.52 (1297)	3.52 (1308)
2. Timely removal of debris and dead animals from pavement	3.43 (1342)	3.46 (1207)	3.50 3.46 3.54	3.56 (1363)	3.50 (1277)	3.51 (1267)	3.50 (1252)
3. Landscaping and overall appearance of roadsides and medians	3.43 (1377)	3.52 (1231)	3.53 3.48 3.58	3.53 (1399)	3.52 (1305)	3.54 (1301)	3.49 (1303)

(continued on next page)

Table 3B. (continued)
Ratings on Aspects relating to
Maintaining Highways and Traffic Flow

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 Means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)	Spring 2006 means (n)
9. Roadside lighting and reflectors for visibility after dark and in bad weather	3.33 (1352)	3.41 (1203)	3.44 3.42 3.46	3.39 (1363)	3.43 (1291)	3.39 (1273)	3.41 (1277)
8. Timing of traffic signals to maintain flow of traffic	3.33 (1347)	3.37 (1212)	3.44 3.41 3.48	3.42 (1387)	3.44 (1291)	3.35 (1283)	3.40 (1273)

Table 4A
Ratings on Aspects relating to
Road Repair and Construction

Aspect rated[a]	Excellent (5) [b]	Good (4)	Fair (3)	Poor (2)	Very Poor (1)	*n (% of sample)*	*mean*
7. Warning signs when workers are present	20%	57%	20%	3%	1%	*1299 (98%)*	*3.92*
6. Workzone signs to direct merging traffic and alert motorists to reduce speed	12%	51%	29%	7%	2%	*1300 (98%)*	*3.65*
9. Advance information about construction and repair projects to the public through tv, radio, and newspapers	14%	44%	30%	9%	2%	*1217 (92%)*	*3.57*
8. Signs about alternative routes when there is construction	8%	39%	37%	14%	3%	*1267 (96%)*	*3.35*
3. Ride quality and smoothness of pavement on interstates	4%	41%	39%	12%	4%	*1275 (96%)*	*3.28*
5. The flow of traffic through workzones	3%	31%	45%	17%	5%	*1278 (97%)*	*3.11*
1. Timeliness of repairs on interstate highways	3%	32%	43%	16%	6%	*1225 (93%)*	*3.10*
4. Ride quality and smoothness on non-interstate highways	2%	30%	46%	16%	5%	*1256 (95%)*	*3.08*
2. Timeliness of repairs on non-interstate highways	2%	25%	48%	20%	5%	*1209 (91%)*	*3.00*

[a]The items are ordered by mean rating, from most positive to least positive. The numbers next to the items indicate the order that they appeared in the questionnaire.
[b]The actual scale in the questionnaire is reversed. However, we have recoded the scale so that the higher score represents a more positive rating.

Table 4B
Mean Ratings on Aspects relating to Road Repair and Construction:
Trends Across Surveys

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)	Spring 2006 means (n)
7. Warning signs when workers are present	3.81 (1374)	3.89 (1233)	3.82 3.79 3.86	3.89 (1402)	3.86 (1302)	3.89 (1299)	3.92 (1299)
6. Work zone signs to direct merging traffic and alert motorists to reduce speed	3.71 (1378)	3.58 (1231)	3.65 3.63 3.67	3.60 (1392)	3.62 (1302)	3.61 (1300)	3.65 (1300)
9. Advance information about construction and repair projects to the public through tv, radio, and newspapers	3.41 (1294)	3.39 (1162)	3.40 3.36 3.45	3.42 (1309)	3.42 (1211)	3.36 (1196)	3.57 (1217)
8. Signs about alternative routes when there is construction	3.25 (1328)	3.32 (1200)	3.24 3.23 3.26	3.29 (1373)	3.34 (1260)	3.32 (1261)	3.35 (1267)
3. Ride quality and smoothness of pavement on interstates	3.08 (1358)	3.26 (1207)	3.28 3.27 3.30	3.29 (1380)	3.28 (1289)	3.22 (1287)	3.28 (1275)
5. The flow of traffic through work zones	2.95 (1372)	2.98 (1221)	3.11 3.05 3.17	3.09 (1378)	3.09 (1299)	3.06 (1279)	3.11 (1278)
1. Timeliness of repairs on interstate highways	2.97 (1322)	3.07 (1171)	3.16 3.12 3.22	3.17 (1337)	3.14 (1227)	3.08 (1238)	3.10 (1225)

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Table 4B. (continued)
Ratings on Aspects relating to Road Repair and Construction:
Trends Across Surveys

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)	Spring 2006 means (n)
4. Ride quality and smoothness on non-interstate highways	2.89 (1342)	3.10 (1188)	3.12 3.10 3.14	3.13 (1369)	3.09 (1272)	3.07 (1265)	3.08 (1256)
2. Timeliness of repairs on non-interstate highways	2.87 (1305)	3.00 (1132)	3.09 3.04 3.15	3.08 (1318)	3.04 (1216)	3.03 (1229)	3.00 (1209)

Table 5A
Ratings on Aspects relating to
Traveler Services

Aspect rated[a] **Top: Total** **Middle: Cross-section** **Bottom: Panel**	**Excellent (5)** [b]	**Good (4)**	**Fair (3)**	**Poor (2)**	**Very Poor (1)**	***n (% of sample)***	***mean***
3. Informational signs at highway exits for food, gas, and lodging	21%	63%	15%	2%	0+%	*1254 (95%)*	*4.02*
4. Informational highway signs about area tourist attractions and state parks	15%	58%	24%	3%	0+%	*1219 (92%)*	*3.84*
1. Cleanliness of rest areas for highway motorists	14%	55%	25%	5%	1%	*1052 (80%)*	*3.74*
2. Safety of rest areas for highway motorists	10%	55%	31%	4%	1%	*994 (75%)*	*3.68*
5. Availability of free IDOT road maps	14%	37%	29%	14%	6%	*871 (66%)*	*3.39*

[a]The items are ordered by mean rating, from most positive to least positive. The numbers next to the items indicate the order that they appeared in the questionnaire.
[b]The actual scale in the questionnaire is reversed. However, we have recoded the scale so that the higher score represents a more positive rating.

Table 5B
Mean Ratings on Aspects relating to Traveler Services:
Trends Across Surveys

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)	Spring 2006 means (n)
3. Informational signs at highway exits for food, gas, and lodging	4.02 (1343)	4.07 (1191)	4.08 4.04 4.13	4.05 (1350)	4.07 (1265)	4.06 (1266)	4.02 (1254)
4. Informational highway signs about area tourist attractions and state parks	3.83 (1303)	3.89 (1159)	3.88 3.83 3.93	3.86 (1320)	3.86 (1223)	3.87 (1240)	3.84 (1219)
1. Cleanliness of rest areas for highway motorists	3.71 (1165)	3.77 (1035)	3.87 3.85 3.89	3.79 (1168)	3.78 (1095)	3.80 (1096)	3.74 (1052)
2. Safety of rest areas for highway motorists	3.58 (1100)	3.67 (983)	3.71 3.70 3.72	3.72 (1118)	3.72 (1021)	3.74 (1037)	3.68 (994)
5. Availability of free IDOT road maps	3.24 (947)	3.34 (847)	3.40 3.35 3.46	3.35 (991)	3.42 (891)	3.42 (908)	3.39 (871)

Table 6A
Summary Statistics for Composite Section Ratings

For each of the above three sections, a composite rating was derived by calculating the average score across the items in the section. This was done by summing all relevant ratings and dividing by the total number of items rated in the respective section.

	Median	Mean	Std dev	*n*
Spring, 2006				
Maintaining highways and traffic flow	3.67	3.62	0.57	*1318*
Road repair and construction	3.42	3.36	0.62	*1315*
Traveler services	3.80	3.75	0.64	*1271*
Spring, 2005				
Maintaining highways and traffic flow	3.67	3.61	0.56	*1315*
Road repair and construction	3.33	3.30	0.64	*1311*
Traveler services	3.80	3.79	0.62	*1278*
Spring, 2004				
Maintaining highways and traffic flow	3.67	3.63	0.53	*1320*
Road repair and construction	3.33	3.33	0.61	*1318*
Traveler services	3.80	3.78	0.65	*1280*
Spring, 2003				
Maintaining highways and traffic flow	3.67	3.62	0.53	*1418*
Road repair and construction	3.33	3.33	0.59	*1416*
Traveler services	3.80	3.77	0.63	*1370*
Spring, 2002 ***Top number: total*** ***Middle number: cross-sectional*** ***Bottom number: panel***				
Maintaining highways and traffic flow	3.67 3.67 3.67	3.63* 3.61 3.67	0.54 0.54 0.53	*1760* *964* *796*
Road repair and construction	3.33 3.33 3.38	3.33* 3.30 3.36	0.60 0.59 0.61	*1753* *959* *795*
Traveler services	4.00 3.80 4.00	3.80* 3.77 3.84	0.60 0.61 0.60	*1680* *900* *780*
Fall, 2001				
Maintaining highways and traffic flow	3.67	3.60	0.53	*1245*
Road repair and construction	3.33	3.29	0.62	*1243*
Traveler services	3.80	3.77	0.63	*1205*
Spring, 2001				
Maintaining highways and traffic flow	3.56	3.54	0.57	*1391*
Road repair and construction	3.22	3.22	0.60	*1389*
Traveler services	3.80	3.71	0.65	*1359*

*indicates the difference between the two Spring 2002 samples is significant at the .01 level.

Table 6B
Differences in Summary Composite Section Ratings
Across Surveys

Rating Area *(in order, differences between Spring 2002 and Fall 2001 represent: total sample, cross-sectional sample, and panel sample)*	***Difference:*** **Fall 2001 – Spring 2001**	***Difference:*** **Spring 2002 – Fall 2001**	***Difference:*** **Spring 2003 – Spring 2002** [a]	***Difference:*** **Spring 2004 – Spring 2003**	***Difference:*** **Spring 2005 – Spring 2004**	***Difference:*** **Spring 2006 – Spring 2005**
For mean ratings						
Maintaining highways and traffic flow	+.06**	+.03 +.01 +.07	+.01	+.01	-.02	+.01
Road repair and construction	+.07**	+.04 +.01 +.07	+.03	+.00	-.03	+.06
Traveler services	+.06**	+.03 +.00 +.07	+.00	+.01	+.01	-.04
For median ratings						
Maintaining highways and traffic flow	+.09	+.00 +.00 +.00	+.00	+.00	+.00	+.00
Road repair and construction	+.11	+.00 +.00 +.05	+.00	+.00	+.00	+.09
Traveler services	+.00	+.20 +.00 +.20	+.00	+.00	+.00	+.00

[a] To calculate this difference, the cross-sectional mean (mean in middle position) was used for the Spring 2002 results.

** indicates significance at the .01 level; * indicates .05 level. Differences involving the most recent results have not been tested for significance.

Overall ratings of IDOT and employees

The continuing questions: overall / general ratings and ratings of IDOT employees

Overall job IDOT is doing. In 2006, just over one in twenty (6%) gave IDOT an overall rating of "excellent" while more than half (55%) responded with "good." About one-third (34%) said "fair" while just more than one in twenty (6%) gave a rating of "poor" and hardly any (1%) gave a "very poor" rating. The average (mean) rating is 3.60. (See the bottom of Table 7A.)

The recent 2006 mean rating reversed, or at least stabilized, a one-time decline found in the mean score that was present in 2005. Ratings of the "overall job IDOT is doing" showed steady positive increases from 2001 through 2003 (3.53 to 3.63) and then consistency in the two surveys of 2003 and 2004 (at 3.63). The 2005 results brought the mean rating down to 3.58, about on par with the Fall 2001 / Spring 2002 levels (in the range of 3.56 to 3.59). Alternatively, it can be concluded that the mean scores have been quite stable, ranging from 3.58 to 3.63, over the past five years. (See the bottom of Table 7B.)

General trust. For the second year in a row, respondents were asked, "Generally speaking, how often do you think you can trust IDOT to do what is right regarding transportation issues?" In response to this, just over two-thirds (69%) chose either "just about always" (11%) or "most of the time" (58%). One-quarter (25%) chose "only some of the time" while one in twenty (5%) chose either "hardly ever" (4%) or "never" (1%). (See the bottom of Table 7B.) The recent mean rating of 3.75 is just slightly lower than the mean rating from 2005 respondents. Further examination shows that this is a result of somewhat fewer giving a "just about always" response (15% to 11%) and somewhat more giving a "most of the time" response (54% to 58%).

Ratings of employees. The rank order of the four Employee Performance aspects is the same as that for previous surveys. Again, the most positive rating goes to "courtesy and respect shown to motorists" (mean of 3.87 in 2006; with 77% giving "excellent" or "good"). The next two items have quite similar mean ratings and quite similar percentages giving "excellent" or "good" ratings: "overall conduct on the job" (3.78; 72% giving "excellent" or "good"); and "helpfulness of the information provided" (3.74; 67%). Again, the final aspect is "accessibility of employees" (3.55; 57%). (See Table 7A for 2006 results.)

The 2006 mean ratings for these aspects are virtually the same as the means in 2005 for three of the aspects (no change or +.01) while a very small increase in the mean score occurred for "overall conduct of IDOT employees on the job" (+.03). Actually, a great deal of stability is present in these mean ratings for the past four survey years. (See Table 7B.)

Table 7A
Ratings of IDOT's Employees on Selected Aspects and Overall Rating of IDOT Performance

Aspect rated[a]	**Excellent (5)** [b]	**Good (4)**	**Fair (3)**	**Poor (2)**	**Very Poor (1)**	***n (% of total)***	***mean***
1. Courtesy and respect shown to motorists	15%	62%	19%	4%	1%	*802 (61%)*	*3.87*
4. Overall conduct of IDOT employees on the job	13%	59%	23%	4%	1%	*730 (55%)*	*3.78*
3. Helpfulness of the information provided by employees	14%	53%	26%	6%	1%	*623 (47%)*	*3.74*
2. Accessibility of employees when you need them	10%	46%	33%	8%	2%	*611 (46%)*	*3.55*
Overall performance: How would you rate THE OVERALL JOB the Illinois Dept of Transportation is doing?	**6%**	**55%**	**34%**	**5%**	**1%**	***1265 (96%)***	***3.60***
General trust:	**Just about always (5)**	**Most of the time (4)**	**Only some of the time (3)**	**Hardly ever (2)**	**Never (1)**	***n (% of total)***	***mean***
How often trust IDOT to do what is right regarding transportation issues?	**11%**	**58%**	**25%**	**4%**	**1%**	***1026 (78%)***	***3.75***

[a]The items are ordered by mean rating, from most positive to least positive. The numbers next to the items indicate the order that they appeared in the questionnaire.
[b]The actual scales (for both scales) in the questionnaire is reversed. However, we have recoded the scale so that the higher score represents a more positive rating.

Table 7B
Mean Ratings of IDOT's Employees on Selected Aspects and Overall Rating of IDOT Performance: Trends Across Surveys

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)	Spring 2006 means (n)
1. Courtesy and respect shown to motorists	3.66 (640)	3.81 (612)	3.86 3.81 3.92	3.89 (887)	3.89 (819)	3.86 (804)	3.87 (802)
4. Overall conduct of IDOT employees on the job	3.64 (598)	3.79 (554)	3.82 3.76 3.88	3.81 (818)	3.79 (744)	3.75 (740)	3.78 (730)
3. Helpfulness of the information provided by employees	3.59 (507)	3.70 (456)	3.78 3.73 3.84	3.78 (713)	3.76 (621)	3.73 (651)	3.74 (623)
2. Accessibility of employees when you need them	3.34 (485)	3.55 (447)	3.52 3.46 3.60	3.58 (687)	3.58 (588)	3.55 (622)	3.55 (611)
How would you rate THE OVERALL JOB the Illinois Dept of Transportation is doing?	**3.53 (1271)**	**3.56 (1157)**	***3.63*** ***3.59*** ***3.68***	**3.63 (1361)**	**3.63 (1249)**	**3.58 (1260)**	**3.60 (1265)**
How frequently do you trust IDOT to do what is right regarding transportation issues?	**----**	**----**	**----**	**----**	**----**	**3.78 (918)**	**3.75 (1026)**

Awareness and use of toll-free telephone number and website

Toll-free telephone number. Just over two-thirds (68%) of the respondents indicated not being aware of IDOT's toll-free number to get information on road conditions. Just over one-quarter (26%) are aware of it but have never called it while the remaining 7 percent said they had called it, 2 percent having done so in the past year. The results are very similar across the past four years. (See Table 8.)

Website. Two-thirds (67%) of the respondents indicated not being aware of IDOT's website that contains information on construction zones and road conditions. Just under one-quarter (23%) are aware of it but have never visited it while the remaining 9 percent said they have visited it. The 2006 results show a 4 percentage point increase in awareness of the website from the 2005 results and a 10 percentage point increase from the 2004 and 2003 results, which were virtually the same. (See Table 8.)

Table 8
Awareness and Use of IDOT Toll-Free Number and Internet Site

Topic	Spring 2003	Spring 2004	Spring 2005	Spring 2006
Aware of toll-free number to get info on road conditions? And have you called this number?				
NOT aware	68%	69%	69%	68%
Aware but never called	24%	23%	24%	26%
Called, but not in last 12 months	5%	5%	5%	5%
Called in last 12 months	3%	2%	2%	2%
Number of respondents	*1353 (95%)*	*1260 (94%)*	*1254 (95%)*	*1252 (95%)*
Aware of website to get info on construction zones and road conditions? And ever visited site to get this info?				
NOT aware of website	77%	77%	71%	67%
Aware but never visited	17%	18%	21%	23%
To website but not for this info	2%	1%	2%	2%
Looked at this info on website	4%	4%	6%	7%
Number of respondents	*1344 (94%)*	*1246 (94%)*	*1239 (93%)*	*1232 (93%)*

New questions: work zone driving and laws

Several new questions in this year's questionnaire are related to work zone driving behaviors and laws.

Awareness of importance of driving safely in work zones. Actually, one of these "new" questions was also asked in a few of the earlier surveys (Fall 2001, Spring 2002 and Spring 2003): "*Over the past twelve months, would you say that your awareness of the importance of driving safely in highway work zones has increased, decreased or stayed about the same?"*

The results, displayed in Table 9A, show that more than six in ten 2006 respondents (63%) reported that their awareness has increased while one-third (33%) said their awareness has stayed about the same. The percent who reported their awareness had increased is substantially more than that found three and four years ago (45% and 48%, respectively) and also higher than the 56 percent found in Fall 2001.

Table 9A
Reported Trend in Awareness of Importance of Driving Safely in Highway Work Zones

Over past twelve months, awareness of importance of driving safely in highway work zones has ...	**Fall 2001**	**Spring 2002**	**Spring 2003**	**Spring 2006**
Increased	56%	48%	45%	63%
Stayed about the same	39%	45%	48%	33%
Decreased	1%	2%	2%	1%
Don't know	4%	5%	5%	4%
number	*1224*	*907**	*1383*	*1292*

*The Spring 2002 results are from the cross-sectional sample.

Other questions. Other work zone-related questions asked about: awareness that work zone speeding fines are much more than speeding fines outside of work zones; reported effect that higher fines have on work zone driving behavior; and knowledge of who suffers the most deaths from construction work zone accidents involving privately-owned vehicles – motorists (drivers and passengers) or construction zone workers? The questions and the results are displayed in Table 9B.

Higher speeding fines in work zones. Results show that more than nine of ten (92%) reported the are aware that speeding fines in construction work zones are much higher than the speeding fines outside of work zones. And, nearly half (48%) of the respondents reported that these higher fines make them "much more likely" to follow work zone speed limits, another near-quarter (24%) reported that these higher fines make them "somewhat more likely" to follow work zone speed

limits, and still another near-quarter (24%) reported the higher fines make no difference in this regard.

Awareness of who dies in work zone vehicle accidents. The results also show that about seven of ten respondents (70%) believe most deaths that occur from accidents involving privately-owned vehicles in construction zones are those of workers, while only slightly more than one in twenty (6%) chose the correct answer, that of motorists (drivers and passengers).[17] The remaining near-quarter either did not know (14%) or said the number for each is about the same (10%).

Table 9B
Other Work Zone-Related Questions

Question	Alternatives	Results
Before reading this question, did you know that speeding fines in work zones are much more than fines outside of work zones?*	Yes, did know	92%
	No, did not know	6%
	Don't know	2%
	N	*1293*
Does having higher fines in work zones make you ... to follow work zone speed limits?	Much more likely	48%
	Somewhat more likely	24%
	No difference	24%
	Don't know	3%
	N	*1283*
When accidents involving privately-owned vehicles occur in work zones, which group suffers the most deaths: motorists (drivers & passengers) or workers?	Motorists	6%
	Workers	70%
	About the same	10%
	Don't know	14%
	N	*1287*

*The preface to this question informed respondents that "speeding violations in work zones can result in a fine of two to three times the fine for speeding outside of work zones."

[17] The question was worded so that work-related accidents were not the object of the question.

New questions: sources of information about traffic/road conditions and construction projects on highway routes

New questions in this year's questionnaire also related to sources of information about road or traffic conditions or about road construction projects affecting highway routes respondents are going to take.

Current sources of information. In one question, respondents were asked to select all sources they generally use to get such information from a list of 15 possible sources and then were asked to choose the single most helpful source. The results are presented in Table 10A, in order of appearance in the questionnaire. Results are presented for the state as a whole as well by District 1 (Chicago area) and Districts 2 through 9 (i.e., the rest of the state or "downstate").

All sources generally used. Listed below are the most frequently-selected sources of information generally used, when respondents were allowed to list all that apply. Note that District 1 (Chicago area) respondents were more likely to choose the two radio-related sources while "downstate" respondents were more likely to choose the weather channel on television, the informal sources of "friends/relatives/coworkers," and the IDOT public service announcements.

Source	Total	Dist. 1	Dists. 2-9
Television news reports/updates	58%	59%	57%
Weather channel on television	42%	36%	51%
Radio news reports/updates	40%	44%	34%
Friends / relatives / coworkers	26%	22%	32%
Special weather/traffic channels on radio	24%	27%	20%
Electronic message signs on highway	24%	25%	23%
Newspaper news articles	20%	21%	19%
IDOT announcements[18]	25%	22%	30%
On television	*15%*	*13%*	*18%*
On radio	*15%*	*14%*	*17%*
In newspaper	*9%*	*7%*	*12%*

Single most helpful current source. When asked to identify the single most helpful source, five sources reached double digits in at least one of the two areas of the state (Chicago area/ rest of state). These are presented below.

Source	Total	Dist. 1	Dists. 2-9
Television news reports/updates	29%	31%	26%
Radio news reports/updates	20%	24%	15%
Weather channel on television	15%	10%	22%
Special weather/traffic channels on radio	11%	14%	6%
Friends / relatives / coworkers	7%	6%	10%

[18] The result on this first line for IDOT announcements is the percent who selected at least one of the three IDOT announcements (15% selected one of these items; 7% selected two; and 3% selected three).

Table 10A.
Current Sources of Information about Highway Route Traffic/Road Conditions or Construction Projects

	Total	District 1	Dists. 2-9
All sources generally use			
Weather channel on tv	42%	36%	51%
Other TV news reports/updates	58%	59%	57%
Special weather/traffic channels on radio	24%	27%	20%
Other radio news reports/updates	40%	44%	34%
Newspaper news articles	20%	21%	19%
TV announcements from IDOT	15%	13%	18%
Radio announcements from IDOT	15%	14%	17%
Newspaper announcements from IDOT	9%	7%	12%
(Any of above three announcements)	*(25%)*	*(22%)*	*(30%)*
IDOT road condition web site	5%	4%	6%
Other web sites	4%	4%	4%
Neighborhood fliers	1%	2%	0+%
Friends / relatives / co-workers	26%	22%	32%
Billboards	4%	5%	4%
Electronic messages signs on highway	24%	25%	23%
Other	2%	1%	3%
n	*1245 (94%)*	*623 (94%)*	*622 (94%)*
Single most helpful source			
Weather channel on tv	15%	10%	22%
Other TV news reports/updates	29%	31%	26%
Special weather/traffic channels 0n radio	11%	14%	6%
Other radio news reports/updates	20%	24%	15%
Newspaper news articles	2%	1%	3%
TV announcements from IDOT	4%	3%	4%
Radio announcements from IDOT	3%	3%	4%
Newspaper announcements from IDOT	1%	1%	1%
IDOT road condition web site	1%	0+%	3%
Other web sites	2%	2%	1%
Neighborhood fliers	0%	0%	0%
Friends / relatives / co-workers	7%	6%	10%
Billboards	0%	0%	0%
Electronic messages signs on highway	5%	5%	4%
Other	1%	0+%	2%
n	*1016 (77%)*	*507 (77%)*	*509 (77%)*

Future sources of information when driving. Respondents were also presented with the following question: "... *suppose you were driving and want to know about weather, traffic or road conditions. Listed below are a few ways that, in the future, drivers might be able to get this information. For each relevant item, assume it is available now – and tell us the likelihood that you would use the information source: a) if it was free of charge; and b) if there was a reasonable charge?"* The results are displayed in Table 10B.

Table 10B.
Future Sources of Information about Highway Route Traffic/Road Conditions or Construction Projects

	If free	If reasonable charge
Toll-free number		
Very likely to use	41%	----
Somewhat likely to use	29%	----
Not likely to use	20%	----
Don't know	10%	----
n	*1218 (92%)*	----
Email alerts to cell phone or PDA		
Very likely to use	13%	2%
Somewhat likely to use	18%	9%
Not likely to use	53%	75%
Don't know	17%	15%
n	*1029 (78%)*	*1002 (76%)*
Updates called to cell phone		
Very likely to use	15%	2%
Somewhat likely to use	19%	8%
Not likely to use	50%	76%
Don't know	16%	14%
n	*1052 (80%)*	*984 (74%)*
Web site accessed through cell phone or PDA		
Very likely to use	13%	1%
Somewhat likely to use	16%	6%
Not likely to use	52%	76%
Don't know	19%	16%
n	*1050 (79%)*	*984 (74%)*

We find that the most popular alternative presented is the toll free number that can be called for current conditions, where seven of ten (70%) of the respondents reported that they would either be "very likely" to use it (41%) or "somewhat likely" to (29%).

If free of charge, the other three services gained "very likely" or "somewhat likely" respondent proportions of 29 to 34 percent. When "a reasonable charge" is added, the the "very likely" or "somewhat likely" proportions for the three services drop to one-quarter to one-third of their respective "free of charge" proportions.

Service *– percent "very" or "somewhat" likely to use ...*	***If free***	***If charge***
Email alerts	31%	11%
Updates called to cell phone	34%	10%
Web site for access by cell phone or PDA	29%	7%

There is reason to believe that the above somewhat overestimate the proportions that are either "very" or "somewhat" likely to use these three services. This is because fewer respondents answered the questions for these three services than did so for the toll-free number question (about 80% for the free-of-charge questions for these three services vs. over 90% for the toll free number question; about three-quarters for the "reasonable charge" questions). And, it is very probable that these respondents who skipped these questions were not among those likely to use the respective service.[19]

An examination of the results by the two statewide areas (Chicago area and "downstate") shows that downstate respondents are somewhat more interested in the toll-free number service than are Chicago area respondents, having a "very likely" or "somewhat" likely percent of 77% vs. 65% for their Chicago counterparts. The results for all the other questions in this section do not differ between the two areas.

[19] If the same number of respondents had answered the questions regarding the last three services as did so for the toll-free number question, our rough estimate is that the "very likely" or "somewhat likely" percent would have been about 27 percent for the free-of-charge questions and about 8 percent for the reasonable charge questions.

New questions: nature of commuting

Several new questions in this year's questionnaire are related to the nature of the respondents' commute to and from work. The other results are displayed in Table 11A. Highlights are summarized below. (Earlier in the section where we described the sample, we presented the results for average length and time of the commute to/from work. These length/time of commute questions were also asked last year.)

Table 11A.
Questions about Commuting to/from Work

	Total	District 1	Dists. 2-9
Nature of commute			
Drive to / from work	92%	90%	97%
Ride with others drivers	1%	1%	1%
Carpool with others	1%	1%	2%
Public transportation (mass transit, Such as buses or trains)	5%	8%	0+%
Other	1%	1%	1%
n	*764 (58%)*	*401 (61%)*	*363 (55%)*
Why not use public transportation			
Not available to/from job	58%	55%	63%
Not close to home/job	20%	23%	17%
Schedule does not fit bus/train	18%	19%	16%
Costs too much	3%	4%	1%
Need car for work	18%	19%	17%
Need car to run errands	14%	13%	14%
Personal safety concerns	4%	5%	2%
Buses/trains too crowded	3%	4%	2%
Can ride with other drivers	1%	1%	1%
Just prefer to drive	21%	19%	25%
Other	3%	3%	2%
n	*718 (54%)*	*361 (55%)*	*357 (54%)*
Take same route or different route to/from work?			
Always take same route	45%	40%	52%
Change route	55%	60%	48%
n	*701 (53%)*	*351 (53%)*	*350 (53%)*
Check traffic / road conditions for commute before driving?			
Never or rarely check them	50%	44%	57%
Sometimes check	35%	36%	34%
Always/almost always check	15%	19%	10%
n	*689 (52%)*	*349 (53%)*	*340 (52%)*
If change route:			
Never or rarely check them	38%	33%	47%
Sometimes check	42%	42%	41%
Always/almost always check	20%	25%	12%
n	*362*	*202*	*160*

Over 90 percent of the statewide respondents drive to/from work. Only one in twenty (5%) reported they take public transportation. Not surprisingly, nearly all of those who reported taking public transportation are in District 1. Still, however, nine of ten (90%) of the licensed driver respondents in District 1 reported driving to/from work.

The major reasons given by respondents for not using public transportation are summarized below. Note that the lack of availability to/from their job is the most frequently-checked reason for both "downstate" respondents (63%) and Chicago area (55%) respondents. Five other reasons gained double-digit proportions in each of the two areas of the state.

Reasons	*Statewide*	*Dist. 1*	*Dists. 2-9*
Not available to/from job	58%	55%	63%
Just prefer to drive	21%	19%	25%
Not close to home/job	20%	23%	17%
Schedule does not fit	18%	19%	16%
Need car for work	18%	19%	17%
Need car to run errands	14%	13%	14%

Over half (55%) of the commuters change their commute route, "depending on traffic, weather, or other highway-related conditions." This proportion climbs to six in ten (60%) for District 1 respondents. "Downstate" respondents are fairly equally split between those who always use the same route (52%) and those who change their route (48%).

Half of the statewide respondents never or rarely check traffic / road conditions for their commute before driving while just over one-third (35%) do so sometimes and 15 percent do so "always/almost always." *For those who change their route depending on highway-related conditions*, six of ten statewide respondents (62%) check conditions before their commute either sometimes (42%) or "always/ almost always" (20%). Both for all commuters – and for those who change their route, District 1 respondents are about twice as likely as "downstate" respondents to check conditions before their commute "always/almost always" (19% vs. 10% for all commuters; 25% vs. 12% for those who change their route).

New questions: sources of information about commute traffic and highway conditions

Two new questions asked about drivers' sources of traffic and road conditions before driving on their commute and during their commute drive. These results are displayed in Table 11B.

Sources before the commute. Two sources are, by far, the predominant sources of information for traffic and road conditions before the commute drive: AM or FM radio station (70%) and television (58%). While this is the case for both Chicago area and "downstate" respondents, Chicago area respondents were somewhat more likely to select the AM/FM radio station alternative (74% vs. 64%) while "downstate"

respondents were more likely to select television (70% vs. 50%). All other sources were selected by less than 5 percent of the respondents.

Table 11B.
Sources of Commuting Traffic and Road Conditions

	Total	District 1	Dists. 2-9
Before driving, sources check for commute route			
Television	58%	50%	70%
IDOT website	2%	2%	4%
Other website	3%	3%	2%
AM or FM radio station	70%	74%	64%
Satellite radio station	3%	3%	3%
Other	3%	3%	4%
n	*442 (34%)*	*242 (37%)*	*200 (30%)*
When driving, sources check for commute route			
Conditions personally observe	56%	52%	61%
Electronic message signs	22%	25%	17%
AM or FM radio station	73%	75%	70%
Satellite radio station	2%	1%	3%
Cell phone calls to friends/other drivers	12%	9%	16%
Cell phone call to info service/number	2%	2%	2%
IDOT website (via cell phone or PDA)	0+%	0%	1%
Highway Advisory Radio station	5%	5%	5%
Other	3%	3%	2%
n	*707 (54%)*	*369 (56%)*	*338 (51%)*

Sources during the commute. An AM/FM radio station is the source most-frequently cited by both Chicago area (75%) and "downstate" (70%) respondents for information about traffic/road conditions during their commute. Conditions drivers personally observe is second in both areas (52% in Chicago area; 61% "downstate"). A distant third in both areas is electronic message signs on highways (25% in Chicago area; 17% "downstate"). For "downstate" drivers, cell phone calls to friends/other drivers is virtually tied with electronic message signs (16%) as a source; for Chicago area drivers, these cell phone calls are less frequent but still rank fourth (at 9%). The Highway Advisory Radio station is the other source cited by at least 5 percent of the respondents.